



What is Time?, by J. Krishnamurti

Do you know what time is? Not by the watch, not chronological time, but psychological time? It is the interval between idea and action. An idea is for self-protection obviously; it is the idea of being secure. Action is always immediate; it is not of the past or of the future; to act must always be in the present, but action is so dangerous, so uncertain, that we conform to an idea which we hope will give us a certain safety. Do look at this in yourself. You have an idea of what is right or wrong, or an ideological concept about yourself and society, and according to that idea you are going to act. Therefore the action is in conformity with that idea, approximating to the idea, and hence there is always conflict. There is the idea, the interval and action. And in that interval is the whole field of time. That interval is essentially thought. When you think you will be happy tomorrow, then you have an image of your-self achieving a certain result in time. Thought, through observation, through desire, and the continuity of that desire sustained by further thought, says, 'Tomorrow I shall be happy. Tomorrow I shall have success. Tomorrow the world will be a beautiful place.' So thought creates that interval which is time. Now we are asking, can we put a stop to time? Can we live so completely that there is no tomorrow for thought to think about? Because time is sorrow. That is, yesterday or a thousand yesterday's ago, you loved, or you had a companion who has gone, and that memory remains and you are thinking about that pleasure and that pain-you are looking back, wishing, hoping, regretting, so thought, going over it again and again, breeds this thing we call sorrow and gives continuity to time. So long as there is this interval of time which has been bred by thought, there must be sorrow, there must be continuity of fear. So one asks oneself can this interval come to an end? [...] Now if one is lost in a wood, what is the first thing one does? One stops, doesn't one? One stops and looks round. But the more we are confused and lost in life the more we chase around, searching, asking, demanding, begging. So the first thing, if I may suggest it, is that you completely stop inwardly. And when you do stop inwardly, psychologically, your mind becomes very peaceful, very clear. Then you can really look at this question of time. --J. Krishnamurti